REMARKS

This Amendment responds to the Office Action dated August 18, 2004 in which the Examiner objected to claims 1-10, 12, 13, 15 and 16, rejected claims 1-13 under 35 U.S.C. §112 second paragraph and rejected claims 1-16 under 35 U.S.C. §103.

Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner corrects the acknowledgment of priority found on PTO 326. In particular, the Examiner stated that he acknowledged that <u>some</u> of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received. However, Applicants respectfully point out to the Examiner that the application is based only upon one priority document which was filed. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner acknowledge that <u>all</u> certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

As indicated above, claim 1 has been amended for a typographical error. In addition, claims 2-10, 11, 12, 15 and 16 have been amended merely as an accommodation for the Examiner for stylistic reasons. Applicants respectfully submit that the original claims are proper and do not need to start with the term "The" as evidenced by MPEP §608.01 which gives examples of acceptable dependent claims all starting with the word "A". Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner approves the amendments and withdraws the objections to the claims.

As indicated above, claims 1 and 11 have been amended in order to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the Applicant regards as the invention. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner withdraws the rejection to the claims under 35 U.S.C. §112 second paragraph.

Claim 1 claims an equipment management system and claim 11 claims an equipment management method for managing equipment by an equipment management apparatus for acquiring management information from the equipment and a central management apparatus for centrally managing management information making packet data communication via a network over which a data processor is connected. The central management apparatus and method include a transmission controller for transmitting, to the data processor in advance of installing a new equipment management apparatus, packet data containing connection check data addressed to a newly installed equipment management apparatus. A reception controller acquires the packet data containing the connection check data transmitted to the apparatus from the data processor before starting equipment management.

Through the structure and method of the claimed invention transmitting, to a data processor in advance of installing a new equipment management apparatus, packet data containing connection check data which is addressed to a newly installed equipment management apparatus, and having the equipment management apparatus acquire the packet data from the data processor, as claimed in claims 1 and 11, the claimed invention provides an equipment management system which can speedily make a connection check when equipment management apparatus is newly installed. The prior art does not show, teach or suggest the invention as claimed in claims 1 and 11.

Claim 14 claims an equipment management method for managing equipment by an equipment management apparatus for acquiring management information from equipment and a central management apparatus for centrally managing management information making communication in accordance with a first

communication system or a second communication system. The equipment management method comprises the steps of registering information concerning an equipment management apparatus to be newly installed at the central management apparatus; determining whether a communication system between the newly installed equipment management apparatus and the central management apparatus is a first communication system or a second communication system; and in the case where the communication system is the first communication system, the central management apparatus transmitting connection check data addressed to the equipment management apparatus without receiving initial transmission data from the equipment management apparatus to be newly installed, and in the case where the communication system is the second communication system, the central management apparatus transmitting the connection check data addressed to the equipment management apparatus in response to reception of the initial transmission data from the equipment management apparatus to be newly installed.

Through the method of the claimed invention determining whether a communication system is a first or second communication system and communicating therewith with different methods including transmitting data without receiving initial transmission data when a first communication system is used and by transmitting data in response to reception of initial transmission data when a second communication system is used as claimed in claim 14, the claimed invention provides an equipment management method which can change the method for initial settings in order to speedily connect the device. The prior art does not show, teach or suggest the invention as claimed in claim 14.

Claims 1-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over *Kuroyanagi et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 5,894,416) in view of *Moeller et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,694,384).

Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner's rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §103. The claims have been reviewed in light of the Office Action, and for reasons which will be set forth below, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner withdraws the rejection to the claims and allows the claims to issue.

Kuroyanagi et al. appears to disclose an equipment control unit is composed of storage means for storing a control data for controlling an equipment, control means for controlling the equipment based on the control data stored in the storage means, and communication means for communicating with a centralized control system for making the centralized control for a plurality of equipments. The control means rewrites the control data stored in the storage means with a received control data when it receives the control data from the centralized control system. (abstract) The setting of initial values necessary for the transmission and reception to and from the external device will be described below. When the data of the copying apparatus 100 is transferred to the external device 999 such as a computer on the management side through a telephone line, or conversely, the data is transferred from the computer 999 on the management side to the copying apparatus 100, the data is transferred using a device ID registered in both the copying apparatus main component and the computer on the management side, a password, and a telephone number of a communication partner registered in the copying apparatus main component. And the device ID, the password and the telephone number of communication partner are referred to as the initial values for starting the

communication. First, the outline of the data transfer using the initial values will be described below. In calling from the copying apparatus 100 side, the telephone number of the communication partner registered in the copying apparatus main component is called, and after the line connection, the device ID from the copying apparatus side is judged with the computer 999 on the management side, and a corresponding password is returned. This password is checked on the copying apparatus side, and then the data transfer is started if the password is normal. Next, in calling from the computer 999 on the management side, the copying apparatus 100 on the user side is called, and after the line connection, the device ID from the copying apparatus 100 side is judged with the computer 999 on the management side, and a corresponding password is returned. If this password is normal on the copying apparatus 100 side, the line is once disconnected. And the data transfer is started by performing a calling operation from the copying apparatus side as previously described. In this way, the start of data transfer can be conducted only if the initial values as above described are correctly registered. While in this example, the initial values are transmitted as the data from the host computer 999 on the management department side to the communication controller 900, and set by being stored in the RAM 903 via the modem 905, it is apprehended that other telephone number ID and password may be set by a computer other than that on the normal management base. Therefore, the initial values should not be easily set. A measure to prohibit the arbitrary setting of the initial values will be described below. If an "ID" key 635 is depressed while the "*" key 601 is depressed, on the operation unit 600 as shown in FIG. 5 which is provided in the copying apparatus 100, a message "Initial data reception permitted?" is displayed on the LCD display screen 701. If an

"OK" key 628 is then depressed, a message "Authorized state" is displayed on the LCD 701 for a certain time, and the data for authorizing the setting of initial data is transmitted from the copy controller 800 to the communication controller 900 whereby an authorization flag is set up at a specific address of the RAM 903 for the communication controller 900 to be placed in the authorized state. In this authorized state, the previously-mentioned initial values are received from the host computer 999 on the management base, and if the reception is terminated, the authorized flag is cleared so that the operation is placed in an inhibit state for inhibiting the input of the initial values. In this way, as the input of initial values is not allowed unless any operation is made from the operation unit 600 again, it is possible to prevent the imprudent, undue input of initial values. (col. 12, line 48 through col. 13, line 49)

Thus, *Kuroyanagi* merely discloses transmitting initial values from a host computer 999 on a management department side to a communication controller 900. Nothing in *Kuroyanagi et al.* shows, teaches or suggests transmitting, in advance of installation, packet data containing connection check data addressed to a newly installed equipment management apparatus as claimed in claims 1 and 11. Rather, *Kuroyanagi* merely discloses transmitting initial values from a host computer 999 to a communication controller 900.

Additionally, *Kuroyanagi et al.* merely discloses communication between a copying apparatus 100 and an external device 999 through a telephone line. Nothing in *Kuroyanagi et al.* shows, teaches or suggests a) determining whether a communication system is a first communication system or a second communication system or b) transmitting data without receiving initial transmission data when the communication system is a first communication system and transmitting data in

response to reception of initial transmission data when the communication system is a second communication system as claimed in claim 14. Rather, *Kuroyanagi et al.* merely discloses communicating through a telephone line.

Moeller et al. appears to disclose a method and system for allowing a user to configure the capabilities of an office device from a remote site through communication means, such as the Internet, Intranet, satellite, wireless, modem connection link, access codes provided via telecommunications, etc. (col. 2, line 55-60) The scanner company can install changes into any one or all of the software layers via a system configuration port 30 operatively connected via the Internet 20 or a download application 25 to the scanning PC workstation (PC) 10. Connection to the system configuration port 30 permits a user to alter or update from a remote site the soft features 40 of the PC 10 and the soft features 55 of the scanner 50. The soft features 40 and 55 as configured by the user are then utilized to control the scanning device (limited feature scanner) 50 and the user pays for only those features enabled for only a desired or selected period of time. Additionally, the limited feature scanner 50 is operatively connected to a local gateway system 60 which is in turn connected to a remote browser 70 via the Internet 20. The remote browser 70 allows access to an authorized service provider access port 75. Access to the authorized service provider access port 75 allows configuration of the Video Scanner layer 55 of the limited feature scanner 50 and provides scanner diagnosis and preventative maintenance. In an alternate embodiment of the invention, connection to the remote browser 70 is achieved through conventional modem-telephone-modem connection 120. In this embodiment, the limited feature scanner 50 utilizes a localized modem 80 to connect via conventional telephonic means 90 to a remote modem 100 that is

connected to a remote gateway system 110, in turn connected to remote browser 70. (col. 3, line 59 through col. 4, line 18)

Thus, *Moeller et al.* merely discloses configuring capabilities of an office device through various communication means. Nothing in *Moeller et al.* shows, teaches or suggests transmitting, in advance of installing new equipment management apparatus, packet data containing connection check data addressed to the newly installed equipment management apparatus and acquiring the packet data before starting the equipment management as claimed in claims 1 and 11. Rather, *Moeller et al.* merely discloses configuring office devices from a remote site through various communication means.

Additionally, *Moeller et al.* merely discloses different alternative connection methods such as either through an internet 20 or utilizing a localized modem via a conventional telephone. Nothing in *Moeller et al.* shows, teaches or suggests a) determining whether a communication system is a first communication system or a second communication system and b) transmitting data without receiving initial transmission data when the communication system is a first communication system while transmitting data in response to reception of initial transmission data when the communication system is the second communication system as claimed in claim 14. Rather, *Moeller et al.* merely discloses alternative embodiments for connection to a remote browser 70.

Since neither *Kuroyanagi et al.* or *Moeller et al.* show, teach or suggest the primary features as claimed in claims 1, 11 and 14 as discussed above, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner withdraws the rejection to claims 1, 11 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. §103.

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Claims 2-10, 12-13 and 15-16 depend from claims 1, 11 and 14 and recite additional features. Applicant respectfully submits claims 2-10, 12-13 and 15-16 would not have been obvious within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §103 over *Kuroyanagi et al.* and *Moeller et al.* at least for the reasons as set forth above. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner withdraws the rejection to claims 2-10, 12-13 and 15-16 under 35 U.S.C. §103.

The prior art of record, which is not relied upon, is acknowledged. The references taken singularly or in combination do not anticipate or make obvious the claimed invention.

Thus is now appears that the application is in condition for reconsideration and allowance. Reconsideration and allowance at an early date are respectfully requested.

If for any reason the Examiner feels that the application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact, by telephone, the Applicant's undersigned attorney at the indicated telephone number to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

In the event that this paper is not timely filed within the currently set shortened statutory period, Applicant respectfully petitions for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such extension of time may be charged to our Deposit Account No. 02-4800.

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In the event that any additional fees are due with this paper, please charge

our Deposit Account No. 02-4800.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: <u>December 15, 2004</u>   By: _____

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